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Olympic Torch Relay starts in Japan – 27th March, 2021

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The Tokyo Olympics torch relay started. The Games were postponed due to coronavirus but they will go ahead in July. Japan's women's football team carried the torch in the first leg. It began in Fukushima, which was devastated by the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear meltdown. The torch is made of aluminium recycled from housing built for survivors of the disasters. Fukushima was chosen as the start of the relay to show it has recovered.

The head of Japan's Olympic organizing committee said: "The flame will embark on a 121-day journey and will carry hopes...and wishes for peace." She asked people to look at live broadcasts of the relay and not travel to watch it because of COVID 19. Spectators must clap rather than cheer. Japan's Prime Minister wants to stage a "safe and secure" Olympics in spite of the pandemic. He said: "We will do our utmost on coronavirus measures."

Level 5

The torch relay for the Tokyo Olympics has started. The Games were postponed due to coronavirus but organizers are determined they will go ahead in July. Members of Japan's women's football team carried the torch in the first leg of the relay. It began in Fukushima, which was devastated by the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear meltdown. The relay torch is made of aluminium recycled from housing built for survivors of the triple disaster. Fukushima was chosen as the start of the relay to show it has recovered. Many people say claims of recovery are premature.

The head of Japan's Olympic organizing committee opened the relay ceremony. She said in her address: "The flame will embark on a 121-day journey and will carry the hopes...and wishes for peace." She asked Japanese people to look at live broadcasts of the relay and not travel to watch it because of a spike in COVID 19 cases. Spectators must wear face masks and clap rather than cheer. Japan's Prime Minister restated his commitment to stage a "safe and secure" Olympics in spite of the pandemic. He said: "We will do our utmost on coronavirus measures."

Level 6

The torch relay for the Tokyo Olympics is finally under way. The 2020 Summer Games were postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic but organizers have been determined to ensure they go ahead in July. Members of the Japan women's football team ran as torchbearers in the first leg of the relay on Thursday. It began in Fukushima Prefecture, which was devastated by the triple disasters of the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear meltdown. The relay torch is made of aluminium recycled from prefabricated housing built for survivors of the triple calamity. Fukushima was chosen as the start of the relay to show the area has recovered, although many people say claims of recovery are a little premature.

The head of Japan's Olympic organizing committee, Seiko Hashimoto, opened the torch relay ceremony. She said in her opening address: "The flame will embark on a 121-day journey and will carry the hopes of the Japanese people and wishes for peace." Japanese people are being encouraged to look at live broadcasts of the relay and refrain from travelling to watch it amid fears of a spike in COVID 19 cases. Spectators must wear face masks, and are being urged to clap rather than cheer. Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga reiterated his commitment to stage a "safe and secure" Olympics in spite of the pandemic. He said: "We will do our utmost on coronavirus measures."